

COALE & BARR.

[To accompany Bill H. R. No. 576.]

APRIL 6, 1860.

Mr. MAYNARD, from the Committee on Claims, made the following

REPORT.

*The Committee on Claims, to whom was referred the claim of Messrs. Coale & Barr, "asking that they may be paid for public printing," have had the same under consideration, and beg leave to report:*

That the claimants were the publishers of the "Abingdon Virginian," and were appointed by the Department of State to publish the laws passed at the 1st session of the 32d Congress. They afterwards applied to Mr. Everett, then Secretary of State, for authority to continue the publication for the 2d session of the same Congress. The Hon. Allison White, through whom the application was made, says:

"I have to state that about the middle of the last session of Congress, (2d session 32d Congress,) according to your request, I called at the office of the Secretary of State to inquire if there would be any change in reference to the publication of the laws of the United States in the Virginia papers. Mr. Everett informed me that he contemplated no change, and that I might say to you to continue the publication, which I immediately did."

The petitioners, under this authority, proceeded to publish the laws of the 2d session of the 32d Congress, and on applying to the department for payment were informed that it did not appear from the books of the department that their paper "was one of those selected in which the publication of the laws of that session was authorized to be made."

The act approved August 8, 1846, provides "that the Secretary of State shall cause the publication of the laws of each session in two of the newspapers of the District of Columbia and in each of the several States and Territories, and no more;" and as it appeared from the records of the department that two other papers had been paid for publishing these same laws in the State of Virginia, the department properly declined paying the third. Nevertheless, the department certifies, under its official seal, "that the laws of the United States for the 2d session of the 32d Congress were published in the 'Abingdon Virginian,' as appears by a file of that paper in this department."

Mr. George S. Gideon, the publisher of the official organ, certifies "that the 'Republic,' in which were published the laws of the 2d session of the 32d Congress, was sent to the 'Abingdon Virginian' by the direction of the Department of State."

Such were the circumstances under which the petitioners published the laws, and, as your committee are convinced, in entire good faith. The first instructions sent to Messrs. Coale & Barr stated "that your duties under this appointment may be performed with promptness and certainty, the publishers of the 'Republic' will be requested to forward to you with utmost despatch and regularity that paper during the time in which the laws in question shall be published in it," &c. This was for the 1st session of the 32d Congress. Mr. Everett authorized Mr. White, then a member of Congress, to direct Messrs. Coale & Barr to continue to publish the laws for the 2d session, and Mr. Gideon says he was directed by the department to continue to send them the "Republic," from which to copy. That the work was faithfully performed the department certifies. The only question, then, which presents itself is, should the petitioners be paid for the publication? Your committee think they had reasonable grounds for supposing the "Virginian" had been again selected for publishing the laws; and believe they should be paid the same amount paid the other papers for this work, and they accordingly report the accompanying bill, and recommend its passage.